

**LODI CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL JOINT CITY COUNCIL MEETING
WITH THE LODI CONFERENCE AND VISITORS CENTER
LODI CONFERENCE AND VISITORS CENTER, 2545 W. TURNER ROAD, LODI
WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2002**

A. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The Special Joint City Council meeting with the Lodi Conference and Visitors Center of May 29, 2002 was called to order by Mayor Pennino at 4:25 p.m.

Present: Council Members – Howard, Land, Nakanishi (arrived at 4:50 p.m.) and Mayor Pennino

Absent: Council Members – Hitchcock

Present representing the City: City Manager Flynn, City Attorney Hays, and City Clerk Blackston

Present representing Visitors Center – Nancy Wilkinson, Executive Director of the Lodi Conference & Visitors Center; and Mark Chandler, Executive Director of the Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission

B. TOPIC(S)

Mark Chandler, Executive Director of the Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission, reported that the original Conference and Visitors Center was formed in the 1990s. The current organization, with supervision under the Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission, was launched in 1998. He stated that they currently have 125 labels of Lodi Appalachian wines and 37 wineries.

Nancy Wilkinson, Executive Director of the Lodi Conference & Visitors Center, reviewed accomplishments that have taken place over the past six months. The Wine Trail Map was revised and 50,000 were printed. She commented that the supply is now nearly exhausted. The Lodi Conference and Visitors Bureau (LCVB) Web site was also updated. A PowerPoint presentation marketing Lodi was copied onto mini-CDs for distribution. LodiView, a listing of community events, is e-mailed to 250 people each week. Ms. Wilkinson stated that she is now actively involved in other organizations such as the Destination Marketing Committee. She sponsored a Meeting Planners International luncheon, at which 175 people attended. Advertising was printed in Sunset Magazine, California Travel Planner, Sacramento Magazine, Sacramento Visitor's Guide, and the Gold Country Map. She has been promoting the benefits of joint advertising with local businesses and restaurants. LCVB media advertising has included a Sunset article, a Sacramento Bee and Modesto Bee story, a KVIE Commercial, Comstock's Article, and in June an article will be published in the Better Homes and & Gardens Scrapbook Edition.

NOTE: Council Member Nakanishi arrived at 4:50 p.m.

Speaking engagements were held with the following organizations and reached an audience of 350: Lodi Masons, Lodi Tokay Rotary, Lockeford Clements Kiwanis, Lodi Lions Club, Sunrise Rotary, and Meeting Planners International. LCVB participated in the following events at which 113,300 people attended: Sacramento Renaissance Art Show, KVIE Art Auction Preview Party, L.A. Travel Show, Sacramento Junior Art League, Crane Festival, Spring Wine Show, and the Grape Festival. Group hospitality efforts reached 700 individuals and included the Mexican-American Lions Club, Piranha Produce Group, Sacramento CVB, and the Sunrise Rotary Bike Event.

Direct mailings were distributed to 12,000 individuals through magazine leads, Visitor Guides, LodiView, and Meeting Planners International. Wine Trail Maps were distributed in the Sacramento, Gold Country, Napa and Central Valley areas through hotels/motels, Visitor's Centers, airports, car rental agencies, campgrounds, and the AAA California State Automobile Association. The LCVB Web site received 488,000 hits and 156,000 hypertext markup language pages.

Ms. Wilkinson reported on the following 2002-03 goals:

- New directional signage to Visitors Center
- Continue revising/updating Web site to increase attraction
- Continue advertising campaign with emphasis on group advertising
- Work closely with meeting planners and tour operators to bring in conferences and tour groups
- Put on one new Lodi event to target the Sacramento, Central Valley market
- Speakers bureau
- Local tourism award

Projected activity for 2002-03 includes a 100% increase in speaking engagements, 30% increase in wine/travel shows, 100% increase in group hospitality, no change in direct mailings, and a 55% increase in Wine Trail Map distribution.

Council Member Howard suggested that the LCVB get involved with Art on the Square at Hutchins Street Square and promoting Loel Center's "Garden Center," which is available for rent. She recommended that a few key streets be identified on the Wine Trail map, to assist visitors in navigating to various areas of interest. She offered 'California's Gold – Bay Area Back Roads' as a potential media avenue to pursue. In addition, she suggested kiosk advertising at the Lodi Transit Station and similar sites.

Council Member Land inquired about LCVB's revenue and asked whether Web site advertising had been considered.

Ms. Wilkinson replied that she was looking into banner advertising on the LCVB's Web site. Mr. Chandler stated that he is looking into the possibility of state grant funding.

Council Member Land supported efforts to target the Sacramento market and asked if the LCVB has partnered with the Stockton Visitors Bureau.

Ms. Wilkinson reported that an attempt was made to create a Lodi, Stockton, Modesto visitors map; however, she was met with resistance. She also noted that space large enough to attract conferences is not available in the area, as most organizations want a facility with adequate lodging on the same location to accommodate their attendees.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Ms. Wilkinson stated that the LCVB's budget last year totaled \$195,000. The City's contribution was \$130,000 and the LCVB is requesting the same amount for 2002-03.

City Manager Flynn pointed out that the LCVB's advertising is almost solely for the wineries and he encouraged that more be done to promote the downtown area.

Mayor Pennino made the following recommendations:

- More should be done to promote the downtown area, Hutchins Street Square, the Grape Festival, and sports facilities.
- Need to pursue getting hotels to consider Lodi as a potential site.
- LCVB should participate with the Good Sam's annual event, which this year had 800 participants.
- Provide City Council Members and Economic Development Coordinator Tony Goehring with a supply of the mini-CDs.
- Survey wine-tasting customers for their residence via zip codes.
- Prepare marketing video to be played continuously on a designated Wine & Roses hotel television station.
- The reverse side of the 8.5 x 11 "Discover Lodi!" flyer should be utilized.
- Take advantage of media event when the 49ers football team is in Stockton July 18 and 19; also suggested hosting them for dinner.

In reference to visitors' residences, Mr. Chandler reported that 50% come from Sacramento and 40% are local citizens bringing visiting family members.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Del Smith, representing Wine & Roses hotel, inquired about the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT).

Mayor Pennino stated that Council may consider raising the tax to 10%.

City Manager Flynn noted that a Shirtsleeve Session has been tentatively scheduled to discuss this topic. Currently, annual TOT revenues total approximately \$350,000.

C. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

D. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

Susan J. Blackston
City Clerk